

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 OPR-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SY-05
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 03334

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY), PN
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO PANAMA

REF: A. PANAMA 3089, B. STATE 118035

1. THIS CABLE GIVES OUR FURTHER THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE
DRAFT SCHEDULE IN REF A. IT ALSO RESPONDS TO THE REQUESTS
ON PROGRAM IN REF B.

2. ARRIVAL. AN EARLIER ARRIVAL TIME (I.E., 1400 OR 1430)
IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PARTY SPENDS
THE NIGHT AT CONTADORA OR IN PANAMA CITY. A 1600 ARRIVAL
TIME WOULD NOT ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE PROGRAM
PLANNED FOR JUNE 16. THOUGH THE GOP HAS SAID NOTHING
OFFICIALLY ON THE SUBJECT, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IT
WILL ASK PRESIDENT CARTER TO PARTICIPATE IN A BRIEF CERE-
MONIAL OPENING OF THE NEW TOCUMEN AIRPORT. THIS WOULD
PROBABLY ADD 10 OR 15 MINUTES TO THE 20 MINUTES WE EARLIER
PROPOSED FOR AIRPORT CEREMONIES.

3. EXCHANGE OF INSTRUMENTS. DESPITE THE SMALL SIZE OF
THE JUSTO AROSEMENA PALACE, WE KNOW OF NO BETTER PLACE FOR
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THE MAIN CEREMONY. THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE WOULD SEEM TO BE
AN ENCLOSED ARENA IN THE SURBURBS, SOME FIVE MILES FROM THE
CENTER OF TOWN, WITH A SEATING CAPACITY OF AROUND 10,000.
SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER WILL HAVE A LARGE PUBLIC EXPOSURE
IN HIS SPEECH AFTER THE CEREMONEY, WE DOUBT THE DESIRA-
BILITY OF OPTING FOR THIS RELATIVELY UNDESIRABLE LOCATION.

4. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS. SHALER TRIANGLE WOULD STILL SEEM TO BE THE BEST LOCATION FOR THE SPEECH, PROVIDED THE CEREMONY IS IN THE PALACE.

5. CONTADORA OR PANAMA CITY? CONTADORA HAS MANY DISADVANTAGES VIS-A-VIS PANAMA CITY (REF A). IF THE PRESIDENT SHOULD STAY IN PANAMA CITY, WHETHER IN THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE OR IN A HOTEL (PROBABLY THE HOLIDAY INN), THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE IS SUGGESTED:

1620 DEPART BY CAR FOR RESIDENCE/HOTEL

1630 ARRIVE RESIDENCE/HOTEL

1630-1900 GROUP AND/OR BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH OTHER LATIN AMERICAN CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT

1900-2100 FREE TIME

2100 DINNER. THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET INFORMED US OF WHERE THE DINNER WOULD BE HELD. BECAUSE THE DINING ROOM IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE IS VERY SMALL, WE WOULD EXPECT THE DINNER TO BE IN A HOTEL--PROBABLY TH PANAMA.

6. SANTIAGO. WE ARE WAITING FOR THE VIEWS OF THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT ON THE SANTIAGO LEG OF THE TRIP. AMBASSADOR LEWIS, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF PANAMANIAN PLANNING OF THE VISIT, IS COMING INTO TOWN THIS WEEKEND, AND WE WILL DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
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7. CANAL ZONE. IN ADDITION TO THE OPTIONS MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH 5 OF REF A, ONE POSSIBILITY WOULD BE A VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE HOME OF A ZONE RESIDENT. SUCH VISITS HAVE BEEN VALUABLE DURING CODELS; AND WE BELIEVE THAT A BRIEF EXCHANGE, PERHAPS 30 MINUTES OVER COFFEE WITH AROUND 10 CIVIC AND LABOR LEADERS, WOULD BE BENEFICIAL BOTH TO THE PRESIDENT AND TO THE ZONE RESIDENTS.

8. LAUNCH TRIP. PANAMA CANAL COMPANY RECOMMENDS USE OF PCC TOUR LAUNCH LAS CRUCES FOR THE PRESIDENT, HIS IMMEDIATE PARTY AND SELECTED GUESTS. LAS CRUCES IS A DOUBLE-DECK, STEEL HULL VESSEL POWERED BY SINGLE ENGINE GM6-110 WITH LENGTH OF 64 FEET, BEAM OF 23 FEET AND A CAPACITY OF 100 PERSONS. SEVENTY TO 80 PERSONS WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLY ACCOMMODATED. OTHER PCC LAUNCH CAPACITY WHICH COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PARTY THAT COULD NOT BE ACCOMMODATED ON THE LAS CRUCES INCLUDE:

A. LAUNCH SEAHORSE. LENGTH 54', BEAM 15', ENGINE GM-12V-71, CAPACITY 30 PERSONS.

B. LAUNCH GREYLONG. LENGTH 40', BEAM 12', ENGINES TWIN GM-6-71, CAPACITY 25 PERSONS.

C. LAUNCH PERCH. LENGTH 26', BEAM 10', ENGINES TWIN MERC CRUISER MARINE, CAPACITY 10 PERSONS.

D. CRANE BOAT ATLAS. LENGTH 188', BEAM 43', ENGINES TWIN
CAT D-398-A, CAPACITY 125 PERSONS.

POSSIBILITY ALSO EXISTS FOR CHARTERING PRIVATE LAUNCH
FANTASIA DEL MAR, LENGTH 117', BEAM 29, ENGINES TWIN
GMV-127 1-N, CAPACITY APPROXIMATELY 400 PERSONS.

THE POSSIBILITY ALSO EXISTS OF USING THE PANAMA CANAL
COMPANY-OWNED 10,000 TON SS CRISTOBAL FOR THE PARTIAL
TRANSIT. USE OF THIS VESSEL WOULD DISRUPT ITS SAILING
SCHEDULE AND MODIFICATIONS TO THE VESSEL WOULD BE RE-
QUIRED, SO AN EARLY DECISION ON ITS USE IS NEEDED. USE
OF THE SS CRISTOBAL WOULD POSE TIMING AND OTHER PROBLEMS
RELATED TO EMBARKING AND DISEMBARKING OF THE PRESIDENT
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AND HIS PARTY, I.E., PASSENGERS WOULD PROBABLY BE REQUIRED
TO USE AN ACCOMMODATION LADDER OR OTHER MEANS TO EMBARK OR
DISEMBARK ON AT LEAST ONE END OF THE PARTIAL TRANSIT FOR
SHUTTLE TO OR FROM THE DOCK BY LAUNCH. IT WOULD ALSO
TAKE LONGER TO MAKE A PARTIAL TRANSIT THROUGH GAILLARD CUT
WITH THE LARGER VESSEL. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SCHEDULE FOR
THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO THE LOCKS AND THE PARTIAL TRANSIT
WOULD NEED TO BE INCREASED BY MINIMUM OF ONE ADDITIONAL
HOUR AND POSSIBLY MORE..JORDEN

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